

Land East of High Street - Engagement Plan

Background

The Council's emerging Local Plan (Plan 2040) and Town Centres Strategy (April 2022), alongside Sevenoaks Town's Neighbourhood Plan identified Sevenoaks Town as an area for opportunity in terms of improving connections to Knole; exploring the relocation of the market; revitalising the eastern part of the town centre; the Post Office and telephone exchange site; and curating a programme of events, alongside expansion of its cultural scene; including more things to do in the evening; widening the leisure offer; and providing new homes that support different income levels and life stages.

As part of an initial fact-finding exercise, the Council identified a number of assets under its ownership in Sevenoaks town which, alongside assets put forward by Kent County Council (KCC), have the potential to rejuvenate the land east of Sevenoaks High Street in a once-in-a-lifetime regeneration project.

Various feasibility work and other due diligence studies have been undertaken to explore potential redevelopment options for the site. This has resulted in a shared regeneration vision and a collaborative delivery framework for protecting and enhancing the Council's and partners' assets.

Using a place-based approach to engagement, the two Councils are committed to ensuring that the community and stakeholders are involved in the development of this exciting regeneration project.

Engagement plan

Sevenoaks District Council and Kent Country Council are exploring how their property assets to the east of the High Street in Sevenoaks town centre, including a library, gallery and leisure centre, can help support a child and family-friendly, safe and sustainable thriving place for local businesses, shoppers, visitors, and residents both now and for the future.

We are launching an engagement plan to provide more information about the vision and design being developed by Sevenoaks District Council in partnership with Kent County Council.

Our proposals are being brought forward to benefit those who live, work or spend time in Sevenoaks town. That's why it's important to us that we hear people's views. What do you think of our plans? How can we make them even better? Please get involved and let us know your thoughts today!

Pillory Barn, a Kent-based strategic marketing and brand agency, has been appointed to support Sevenoaks District Council in this phase of the project.

The objective for this activity is to communicate the vision and early concepts for changes to its properties to the east of the High Street in Sevenoaks town centre, the purpose of which is to encourage more people to visit and spend time in the town centre and the surrounding areas.

The engagement and communications plan sets out a series of events with key stakeholders and the wider public to gain insights and sentiment into how they use our assets and more specifically the early concepts.

Engagement timetable

Stakeholder/Activity	Date
Local Member Briefings	8 April 2024
Staff Briefings	w/c 8 April 2024
Press Release (Project Overview, Invitations to public engagement events and focus groups)	10 April 2024
Briefings & Focus Groups with partners and stakeholders	15-19 April 2024
Public Engagement Events – Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	24 and 27 April 2024
Public Engagement Event – Online	29 April 2024
Online engagement website and survey open	24 April – 5 May 2024
Feedback from engagement events – committee reports	June 2024

The engagement events will include information boards outlining the concepts and there will be individuals on hand to answer questions throughout the day.

There will also be areas for people to interact with the development by writing or drawing those areas that they would like to see included in the new facilities being proposed.

We would include facilitated sessions with young people and children in attendance including:

- Example venue maps where people can create their vision for the facilities including cut-outs that they can stick to a venue outline.
- Drawing and colouring examples for younger children to feel part of the process whilst their parents / guardians take part in the engagement events.

We will encourage local schools to take part and support children and young people to have their say on the future of their town centre.

Providing feedback

Feedback can be provided through two channels.

- **On the day** we will facilitate feedback through ‘one liner’s that people can note down throughout the day and stick to a feedback board. Pillory Barn will collate this feedback throughout the day.
- **Online engagement** will be collated through a bespoke digital survey based around the project concepts launching on 24 April 2024 and running until 5 May 2024.

Survey questions and interactive responses will be added to engagement boards.